



University of  
St Andrews

## Grading review

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1.6	Fix broken link to the Grading Review forms, link to new Grading Review webpage, and migrate onto new policy template.	Published	Lisa Stewart	16/12/2025

- British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us via the online BSL Video Relay Interpreting Service: <https://contactscotland-bsl.org>
- This document and forms associated with this document are available in an alternative format upon request.

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## **1. Statement**

- 1.1 This policy reflects the University's commitment to reward members of staff in a fair, equitable and consistent manner for the work they are required to undertake and ensures that the principles of equal pay for work of equal value are being implemented.
- 1.2 Additional support can be accessed on the [Grading Review Process online guide](#).

## **2. Purpose**

- 2.1 The University recognises that, due to business or institutional needs and requirements, roles can change in terms of demand, responsibility, accountability and complexity. This policy therefore provides a mechanism whereby, following a substantive change in role requirements, the grading of a post can be reviewed.

## **3. Scope**

- 3.1 This policy applies to all University employees. Specifically, employees going through a grading review process.

## **4. Grading review and workforce planning**

- 4.1 As part of the ongoing review of structures and staffing within the University, all Schools/Units will be required to inform the Principal's Office of proposed staffing changes, including where duties are being moved from one person to another, and where the redistribution may have an impact on grade. Such notification must be given in advance of any permanent change to a role.
- 4.2 As part of the annual planning cycle, all Heads will be asked to inform the Principal's Office of any proposed restructuring within the School/Unit and the implications, if any, this will have on current staff in relation to the duties that they undertake. Along with this, Heads will be asked to confirm any staffing changes that they are aware of due to leavers or retirements.
- 4.3 It is accepted that, from time to time, structures may change out with this cycle due to staff leaving or areas of responsibility within the School/Unit changing. In these circumstances, approval for any proposed restructuring or changes to staff duties, which may result in regrading, must be agreed with the relevant member of the Principal's Office before any change takes place.

- 4.4 All staff replacements, new posts or extensions should be submitted to the [Workforce Planning Group](#).
- 4.5 The grading review policy applies to all roles in pay grades 1 to 8, with the exception of academic, research and teaching staff considering promotion to grades 7, 8 or 9 who have access to a separate [Academic Promotions Procedure](#). Please note that grading review procedures for all roles are underpinned by the University's chosen job evaluation scheme, Higher Education Role Analysis ([HERA](#)).
- 4.6 This policy has been written in consultation with and agreed by the University's recognised Trade Unions (UCU, UNISON and UNITE).

## 5. Principles

- 5.1 The grading review process enables roles to be evaluated objectively using the HERA methodology to establish whether role changes (i.e. changes to duties, responsibilities, the requirement to attain new or additional skills and competencies etc.) impact upon the current grading of the post. The process is not about rewarding or evaluating the performance of an individual within a role.
- 5.2 A request for a grading review may be initiated by the individual undertaking the role (or group of individuals doing directly comparable work) or the line manager or Head of School/Unit.
- 5.3 Role changes should be in line with strategic plans and objectives. The Head of School/Unit will be asked to comment on this in a separate form (see [Stage 1](#)).
- 5.4 A grading review request must be based on significant and permanent changes to the role. For temporary changes to roles (e.g. to cover maternity leave or long-term sickness) please contact an [HR Business Partner](#) for advice.
- 5.5 A request for a grading review should not be based on how the responsibilities or activities might or will change in the future.
- 5.6 New appointees to a role should usually have been in post for at least 12 months prior to seeking a review of their grading.
- 5.7 Role changes experienced by staff who have been in post for some time should usually be given 6-12 months to bed down prior to submitting a grading review application in order that their full impact on the role can be accurately assessed.

- 5.8 Roles will only be reviewed once in any 12-month period unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please contact [hera@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:hera@st-andrews.ac.uk) for advice.
- 5.9 An increase in volume of work will not necessarily result in an increase in job size sufficient to merit a change in grade. Evidence would need to be provided that this increase in volume has resulted in a significant increase in responsibility/accountability.
- 5.10 Where operational changes or restructuring could result in a role being downgraded, the Head of School/Unit must consult with and seek the necessary guidance from Human Resources before any changes are implemented, and the grading review process is initiated. Please contact [hera@st-andrews@ac.uk](mailto:hera@st-andrews@ac.uk) for advice.
- 5.11 If a grading review request has been unsuccessful, any subsequent review requests must be based on new role information.
- 5.12 It is expected that any disagreements relating to the requirements or demands of the role will be resolved at a local level (with input from Human Resources as necessary).
- 5.13 Applications for a grading review can be submitted at any time, but they are acted upon only monthly (at the end of the last working day of each month). Any grading review application which is received out with the submission deadline will be processed in the next month - no exceptions will be made.

## **6. Grading review process**

### **6.1 Stage 1: Completion and submission of documentation**

- 6.1.1 The Role Holder and/or line manager should discuss their intention to submit a grading review application with the Head of School/Unit in the first instance.
- 6.1.2 Heads of Schools/Units will be expected to have discussed, in advance, with the Principal's Office any reassignments of roles that might lead eventually to a regrading request. A regular opportunity for doing so will be provided in the planning cycle.
- 6.1.3 At least one month before a grading review application is submitted, the Head should complete the [Head of School and Unit Comments Form](#) and submit it along with an up-to-date School/Unit organisational chart to the [Workforce Planning Group](#). This Group comprises senior members of the Principal's Office and the Director of Human Resources, and its role in relation to the grading review

process is to ensure that changes in duties of the workforce are being strategically planned and co-ordinated. In particular, the WPG will check that any role changes within a School/Unit have previously been part of a planning discussion and any issues/concerns that arise at this stage relating to potential grading changes within a School/Unit will be discussed with the appropriate Head.

- 6.1.4 Once the Head of School/Unit's form has been reviewed by the WPG, the Role Holder may submit a grading review application consisting of a new or amended [Role Outline Document \(ROD\)](#) or Record of Evidence (ROE).
- 6.1.5 Where a ROD or ROE currently exists for a role, the changes in duties and responsibilities that have taken place since the role was initially analysed should be detailed in this original document (this includes scoring through and marking any activities which are no longer a requirement of the role). **Changes/additions must be clearly marked and highlighted in different coloured/emboldened text etc.**
- 6.1.6 The 'Main Purpose of the Role' section must also be updated to reflect the changes to the role, and the verification section at the end of the form completed and signed. If the role holder does not possess an ROD/ROE for the role or it is difficult to incorporate the changes to the role in the original document, please contact Human Resources ([hera@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:hera@st-andrews.ac.uk)).
- 6.1.7 Where no ROD/ROE exists for a role, the role holder is asked to complete, in full, a as part of the review process.
- 6.1.8 The ROD/ROE should be electronically submitted by 5pm on the last day of the month to [hera@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:hera@st-andrews.ac.uk). Heads of Schools/Units should also submit the form and an organisation chart to this address. All forms should be signed, either using an electronic signature or signed and scanned. **If using an electronic signature, the forms must be submitted from the personal University email account of the signatory (i.e. not generic Head of School/Director email accounts).**
- 6.1.9 It is the Role Holder's responsibility to ensure that all documentation is submitted on time. Incomplete or late applications will be held over until the next submission deadline.
- 6.1.10 It is expected that role holders will submit their completed ROD/ROE within 6 months of the Workforce Planning Group confirming permission to proceed otherwise a further application to the group from the Head of School/Unit will normally be required. Role holders who have not submitted their form within 4 months will be sent one

reminder from Human Resources regarding completing their application.

## **6.2 Stage 2: Grading review**

- 6.2.1 Grading review submissions will be subject to review by a panel comprising at least 2 Role Analysts and a representative from the appropriate trade union. (All members of staff involved in role analysis are fully trained in the application of HERA and the grading review process).
- 6.2.2 At this stage, further information or clarification may be sought from the Role Holder or line manager.

## **6.3 Stage 3: Notification of outcome**

- 6.3.1 Where possible, the outcome of the grading review application will be communicated, in writing, to the Role Holder (with copy to the line manager and Head of School/Unit) within 3 months of the last date of the month in which it was submitted e.g. for a submission made during the month of June, the result will be communicated by 30<sup>th</sup> September.
- 6.3.2 All applicants will receive an updated job description based on the 'Main Duties' section of their application.
- 6.3.3 The [Workforce Planning Group](#) and the appropriate trade union will also be notified of all decisions reached by the Grading Review Panel.

## **7. Possible outcomes and effective date of regrading**

- 7.1 The outcome of the grading review request may lead to:

- 7.1.1 ***The role being 'green-circled'*** i.e. it has been established that the current grade for the role is too low. In such circumstances the salary for the role will be uplifted to the minimum pay point of the new grade assigned via the grading review process. The effective date of the salary uplift will be from the day following the applicable submission deadline i.e. the first day of the month following submission.
- 7.1.2 ***The role being 'red-circled'*** i.e. the current grade for the role is too high. In the minority of cases the University's agreed red-circle policy will be applied (see [Appendix A](#)). Where the red-circle policy is implemented, it will be done so with effect from the day following the applicable submission deadline.

7.1.3 ***The role being evaluated at the same grade.*** In such circumstances there will be no change to the grade/salary of the role.

7.2 Where the grading of a role has changed as a result of this process, due consideration will be given to the grading of any identical roles elsewhere in the School/Unit.

## **8. Appeals**

8.1 Appeals must be based on procedural grounds only. Should the role holder believe that there has been a breach in the grading review procedures, as outlined above, they can raise an appeal against the grading decision.

8.2 Please note that an appeal cannot be raised on the grounds that the role holder disagrees or is not satisfied with the outcome of the review process. Also, should the responsibilities/demands of the role have changed following the submission of a grading review request, this information will be considered at a future grading review round, not via the appeals process.

### **8.3 Appeal process**

8.3.1 Notification that an appeal is being brought must be submitted, in writing to the Director of Human Resources, within **10 working days** of the date specified on the grading review outcome letter.

8.3.2 Once notification of the appeal is received, an Appeal Form will be issued to the appellant for completion. The appellant will be asked to state the grounds on which the appeal is being made and provide information to support this. The Appeal Form must be completed and returned to the Director of Human Resources within **15 working days** of date of issue.

8.3.3 Normally within 15 working days of receipt of the completed Appeal Form, an Appeal Panel will be convened. The Panel will comprise an executive member of the Office of the Principal (Chair), a Head of School/Unit (unconnected with the appellant) and a representative of the appropriate trade union, none of whom will have been involved in the evaluation of the post.

8.3.4 In considering the appeal, the Appeal Panel will review the written submission from the appellant and may request further/supplementary information from the appellant and/or the Grading Review Panel. The Appeal Panel may also request relevant parties to attend a hearing. (Appellants have the right to be accompanied by a representative of the appropriate trade union or a work colleague and may request to appear before the Appeal

Panel). The Appeal Panel may also allow adjournments of the hearing if further information is required.

- 8.3.5 The Appeal Panel cannot alter the grade assigned, but it can refer the post back for re-evaluation by another freshly constituted Grading Review Panel, chaired by the Director of Human Resources, if it considers that the process leading to the grading of the post has been flawed and, as such, may have impacted upon the grading of the post.
- 8.3.6 The Appeal Panel's decision will be made by its members with its Chair exercising, if necessary, a casting vote.
- 8.3.7 The Panel will write to the appellant within **7 working days** of the final meeting to advise them of the outcome of the appeal.
- 8.3.8 The decision taken by the Appeal Panel and any second Grading Review Panel will be final.

## 9. Support

- 9.1 The University offers a confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), which is available to all employees to support with personal problems that can affect work life, home life, and general wellbeing. The service also gives free access to a digital Health and Wellbeing App which gives support and guidance on a wide range of resources on physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, work and productivity, movement sleep, financial wellbeing, nutrition, hydration and energy. Contact details and how to register can be found on the [EAP website](#).
- 9.2 Employees have access to the [Staff Wellbeing webpage](#) which offers support on various matters.
- 9.3 Any questions employees have about matters raised in this policy should be raised with the [HERA team](#). Any work-related issues should be addressed directly with their line manager.
- 9.4 For internal support, [contact HR](#) or where an employee is a member of a [Trade Union](#), they can reach out to their representative for support and guidance.

## 10. Version control

- 10.1 This policy is non-contractual and may be amended at any time.

- 10.2 This policy may be reviewed in the light of operational experience, sector developments and changing organisational needs. As and when a full review is undertaken, trade union and representatives will be consulted in line with the [Policy Working Group Terms of Reference](#).
- 10.3 Any feedback on the policy content should be directed in the first instance to the [HR Policy Officer](#) or via the [HR Feedback Form](#).

<b>Version number</b>	<b>Purpose / changes</b>	<b>Document status</b>	<b>Author of changes, role and school / unit</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.0	Migration of policy to the Governance Zone.	Published	Susan Gibson Human Resources.	20/06/2019
1.1	Change of classification from internal to public	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	12/11/2019
1.1	Change to review date (moved to 2021)	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	01/12/2020
1.2	Change to review date (moved to 2022) and link added to word version of Grading Review forms.	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	06/09/2021
1.3	Change to review date only.	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	16/08/2022
1.4	Change to review date only.	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	29/08/2023
1.5	Amending the expiry date only to coincide with policy review consultation dates.	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	25/07/2024
1.6	Fix broken link to the Grading Review forms, link to new Grading Review webpage, and migrate onto new policy template.	Published	Lisa Stewart	16/12/2025

## Appendix A - Red-circle process

Where the size/scope of a role has reduced as a result of restructuring, operational changes, the introduction of new technology etc., and the role is consequently evaluated at a lower grade through the grading review process, the University's red-circle policy will be implemented.

This policy aims to ensure that the needs of role holders who occupy red-circled posts are addressed in a fair, consistent and positive manner within the agreed protection period.

The protection period will be three years from the date specified in the grading review letter. During this time role holders will not receive annual increments until they cease to be red circled, they will, however, continue to receive the nationally agreed 'cost of living' increases.

- 1. Process** - When a role is identified as being red-circled, the initial focus will be on the development of the post, where this is possible, in an attempt to bring it back up to the expected grade. Where there are no opportunities for role development, or the development opportunities are uncertain, the role holder will be given the option\* to move to a post at the higher grade (either within or out with the School/Unit) if an appropriate one becomes available.

*\*Individuals in red-circled posts will be interviewed for any appropriate posts (as vacancies arise) before that post is advertised. If an individual is deemed not suitable for the vacant post, having considered reasonable training and support, justification from the Selection Committee must be provided to the Director of Human Resources.*

At the end of the three-year period, if no adjustments have been made, the role holder will move to the top of the grade in which their role has been placed through the grading review process.

- 2. Exceptions to the red-circle policy** - In certain situations, the reduction to the 'size' of a role (in terms of responsibilities/demands) may have been led by or be at the request of the individual undertaking the role. In such cases the red-circle protection policy will not apply. For example, a member of staff who is nearing retirement and who, in agreement with the School/Unit, has sought to reduce the scope of their role, will not be considered as a true 'red-circle' and as such this protection policy will not be implemented.
- 3. Review group** - A Review Group has been established to monitor the progress of red-circled role holders. The Review Group will comprise the Director of HR, the member of the Office of the Principal responsible for HR, and a member of the appropriate trade union. When it comes to monitoring role holders who are not members of a union, the relevant union representative should still form part of the Review Group to monitor these individuals. The remit of the Review Group will be

to ensure that the role holder's needs are being addressed as urgently as possible in a fair, positive and reasonable fashion. Thus, if a situation arises whereby the role holder and their manager come to a difference of opinion, the Review Group will be asked to assist. If there is a realistic opportunity to increase the role, the University will do all it can to support the role holder.